

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' undersigned representative during the telephone interview of January 3, 2007. All of the pending independent claims were discussed during the interview, although no specific prior art was discussed. No agreement was reached during the interview, but the discussion was helpful in clarifying the issues in this case. Applicants also thank the Examiner for the indication that the present application contains allowable subject matter. Independent claim 84 is allowed, and dependent claims 92, 94 and 103 were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form. Upon entry of the present amendment, a number of claims are canceled without prejudice, and all remaining claims will recite subject matter that was deemed allowable in the Office Action.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5, 16-21 and 84-104 were pending. Upon entry of the present paper, claims 90-92, 94, 101 and 103 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and independent claims 1, 16 and 100 are amended to add language from their allowable dependent claims 92, 94 and 103, respectively. Dependent claim 96 is also amended per the Examiner's suggestion in the Office Action, and dependent claim 102 is amended to revise its dependency in view of the cancellation of claim 101.

Applicants submit that the amendments contained herein will place the present application in condition for allowance, rendering moot any further discussion of the Office Action's assertions. Should the Examiner believe that further discussion and/or amendment would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative at the number appearing below.

App. No.: 10/029,349
Reply to Office Action of October 24, 2006

Respectfully submitted,
BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.

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